

***Eleocharis rostellata* (Torr.) Torr.**

beaked spike-rush
Cyperaceae (Sedge Family)

Status: State Sensitive

Rank: G5S2

General Description: Perennial with clustered stems on short, stout, often ascending or nearly vertical rhizomes; culms 16-40 inches tall or sometimes more, more or less flattened at least distally and commonly 1/16 inch wide, some of them commonly proliferous (rooting from an apical bulbil); spikelets ¼ to ½ inch long, 10-20 flowered; scales equaling or surpassing the achene; stigmas 3; achene light greenish to medium brown, rounded trigonous to planoconvex, smooth and shining or slightly cellular-roughened, 1/16 to 1/8 inch long, including the prominent, pale tubercle which is up to 1/16 inch long and is confluent with the body of the achene.

Identification Tips: The characters that distinguish *Eleocharis rostellata* from co-occurring species of *Eleocharis* are the presence of 3 stigmas and a tubercle that is confluent with the achene. In addition, the species produces long, proliferous stems.

Phenology: Details of the phenology of *Eleocharis rostellata* have not been reported. The species apparently flowers from June through August, probably depending somewhat on the microclimate of the site.

Range: Known from Vancouver Island to Nova Scotia, Canada south to northern Mexico and the greater Antilles, and in the South American Andes. In WA, the species is currently known from Grant and Yakima counties in the Columbia Basin physiographic province, and from Okanogan County in the Okanogan Highlands physiographic province.

Habitat: The species is known from salt marshes along the coast and in alkaline or highly calcareous situations inland, often around hot springs. In WA, the species is known from streambanks, lake margins, around springs and in marshes. Associated species include porcupine sedge (*Carex hystericina*), slender sedge (*C. lasiocarpa*), woolly sedge (*C. lanuginosa*), berula (*Berula erecta*), western St. John's wort (*Hypericum formosum*), American bulrush (*Scirpus americanus*), creeping

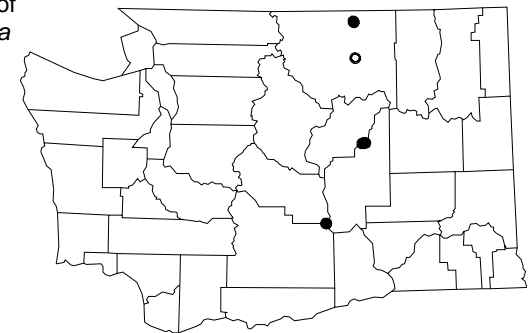
Eleocharis rostellata

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Known distribution of
Eleocharis rostellata
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Habitat (continued): spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), jointed rush (*Juncus articulatus*), giant helleborine (*Epipactis gigantea*), yellow monkey-flower (*Mimulus guttatus*), western witchgrass (*Panicum occidentale*), and western centaury (*Centaureum exaltatum*). Elevation 500 to 1850 feet.

Ecology: The taxon is an early colonizer of marl beds in the eastern portion of its range and is important in the succession of those communities. The species may be important in maintaining natural wetlands functions.

State Status Comments: The small number of known occurrences in the state is the primary factor responsible for the species' status.

Inventory Needs: A systematic inventory of appropriate habitat throughout the species range is needed.

Threats and Management Concerns: The primary threat to the species is invasion of its habitat by exotic species and increasing density of woody species.

References:

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 914 pp.

